

# What's ahead

## Dates for your diary

### One minute with ...

#### How did you end up in tax?

I started in tax just before my first daughter was born over 26 years ago. I was persuaded by my employers at Spicer and Pegler that my talents lay more in tax than auditing! The added responsibilities of being a father gave me the impetus to make the move.

#### What are you working on now?

Currently we have a couple of big corporate disposals on the go – we are handling the tax advice for the vendor shareholders in both cases. One deal involves a local company where I was involved in its birth over 15 years ago. From an initial share capital of £50,000 it is now worth around £40 million.

#### Is there a common problem in tax you come across time and again?

The biggest difficulty is the huge amount of legislation and how widely certain anti-avoidance rules will be applied. Clients don't understand the extent of the grey areas. For instance there are aspects of the new remittance legislation for non-domiciled individuals that are almost impossible to comprehend.

#### What advice would you give to someone entering the profession?

Be prepared to work hard and avoid early specialisation. The ability to communicate well and analyse complex issues in a straightforward way is equally important to technical knowledge. If you've got a personality and an all-round knowledge, you'll be given the experience to achieve a very rewarding career.

#### Is there a recent development in tax that concerns you?

We find a lot of the experience in HMRC is disappearing. Tax law can often be so complex that you need an inspector with knowledge and perspective to give the taxpayer a fair outcome.

#### Name a memorable moment in your career

I've enjoyed building up successful tax teams in previous firms,



**Michael Dawson**  
Managing partner, Forbes Dawson

but the formation of the new Forbes Dawson is the most recent highlight. We've now got 16 great people on board and are a force to be reckoned with in the North West market place.

#### If you could make one change to UK tax law, what would it be?

Bring back indexation relief. Individuals, such as farmers who have held land from before March 1982, should not be taxed on an inflationary gain.

#### What did you think of the Autumn Statement?

I'm still digesting its content! Broadly it looks as though representations made have been listened to, but the repeated government interference on pensions is disastrous. How do they expect individuals to save for their retirement if the reliefs are amended and made less appealing year on year?

#### Where do you stand on the GAAR?

If it removes cowboy schemes and allows people to rely on legislation for tax planning it will be an improvement. Currently many tribunal Judges give the benefit of the doubt to HMRC, particularly in areas such as discovery. The playing field should be leveled if there is a distinction between offensive arrangements and technical issues.

#### You might not know this but ...

I'm an enthusiastic holiday windsurfer – a fantastic sport that I'm still trying to master after 25 years.

### January

- 11 Consultations:** Closing date for comments on *Proposed change to formulation for completely denatured alcohol* and *Improving the operation of PAYE: real time information* (draft regs).  
**Machine games duty:** Deadline for registration with HMRC.
- 16 Upper Tribunal hearings:** *Eyedial Ltd v HMRC* TC00924: VAT, MTIC fraud. *John Mander Pension Trustees Ltd v HMRC* TC01528: assessment under ICTA 1988 s 591C.
- 18 Parliament:** General Anti Tax-Avoidance Principle Bill, second reading in the House of Commons.
- 22 Upper Tribunal hearing:** *Master & Fellows of St Mary Magdalene College v HMRC* TC01522: VAT, partial exemption.
- 25 Parliament:** Land Value Tax Bill, second reading in the House of Commons.
- 28 Upper Tribunal hearing:** *HMRC v British Disabled Flying Association* TC01580: VAT, aircraft for use by handicapped people.
- 29 Upper Tribunal hearing:** *Land Securities plc v HMRC* TC01442: CGT avoidance scheme, effect of TCGA 1992 s 30.
- 31 Self-assessment:** Deadline for submission of online tax return and payment of any tax owed for 2011/12, and payment of first payment on account due for 2012/13.  
**Tax credits:** Deadline for notifying actual income for 2011/12 for claimants who estimated income when renewing their claim.

### February

- 01 Regulations:** The Machine Games Duty (Exemptions) Order, SI 2012/2898, comes into force.
- 06 Consultations:** Closing date for comments on draft Finance Bill 2013 provisions, see [lexisurl.com/hVqx1](http://lexisurl.com/hVqx1).
- 12 Upper Tribunal hearing:** *British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers & Attractions Ltd v HMRC* TC01504: VAT, subscriptions to trade association.
- 19 Upper Tribunal hearing:** *Shop Direct Ltd v HMRC* TC01823: Corporation tax, VAT repayments.

### Coming soon in Tax Journal:

- Special report on the draft Finance Bill 2013: points to watch in practice.
- Examining the decision of the Upper Tribunal in *Charlton* on discovery assessments.
- An evaluation of HMRC's latest settlement opportunity.